Rashi on Obadiah
רש"י על עובדיה
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Rashi on Obadiah

Chapter 1

Verse 1

The vision of Obadiah —Why is Obadiah different that he was chosen to prophesy concerning Edom and did not prophesy any other prophecy? Our Sages of blessed memory stated: Obadiah was an Edomite proselyte. Said the Holy One, blessed be He: From them and in them will I bring upon them. Let Obadiah, who dwelt between two wicked people, Ahab and Jezebel, and did not learn from their deeds, come and impose retribution upon Esau, who dwelt between two righteous people, Isaac and Rebecca, and did not learn from their deeds. [from Sanhedrin 39b]

Verse 2

Behold I have made you small —In contrast with what his father called him, his big son, and his mother called him her big son, the Holy One, blessed be He, says: In My eyes, he is small (Pesikta d'Rav Kahana p. 56; Pesikta Rabbathi, ed. Meir Ish Shalom p. 79a; Pesikta Rabbathi ed. Warsaw p. 144; Gen. Rabbah 65:11). And our Sages (Avodah Zarah 10a) expounded: small for they have neither script nor language. [from Avodah Zarah 10a]
despised —That they did not crown a king the son of a king.

Verse 3

who dwell in the clefts of the rock —Who relies on the support of his ancestors, Abraham and Isaac, but they shall not avail him. the clefts Heb. חַגְוֵי. Cf. (Isa. 19:17) "And the land of Judah shall be to Egypt for a dread (לְחָגָּא)," frayteyne [or fraite] in O.F., a cleft of a rock. And do not wonder about the "vav" of (Gen. 21:16) "like a shot (כְּמִטַּחֲוֵי) ;" in which there is no radical in the word but the "teth" and the "heth."

Verse 4

Verse 5

come upon you Heb. בָּאוּ לָךְ, lit., came to you.
How were you silent? —Why were you sleeping soundly and still until they stole all they desired?
would (the vintagers) not leave over some gleaning grapes? —But these will not leave you anything, for they will search and reveal and seek out your hidden things.

Verse 6

were revealed Heb. נִבְעוּ. Jonathan rendered: were revealed, and it is an Aramaic expression: נִבְעוּ means "sought out." Cf. (Isa. 21: 12) "If you will request, request (אִם תִּבְעָיוּן בְּעָיוּ)."

Verse 7

Until the border... escorted you —Those who promised to aid you, came with you and escorted you to the border of your land, to the boundary, whence they came upon you in war, and with this they enticed you and succeeded.
they prevailed against you —to entice you to leave, and they deserted you.
your food they lay as a wound under you —Even your food your brother Jacob made for you as a wound, for he gave you bread and a pottage of lentils, and thereby you despised the birthright.
wound Heb. מָזוֹר.

Verse 8

Verse 9

And your mighty men shall be dismayed —They shall be dismayed and frightened to flee to the land of Israel [Malbim : to the land of Edom]. And Jonathan rendered: And your mighty men shall be dismayed, dwellers of the southland.
in order that every man be cut off —I.e, every mighty man. [from Targum Jonathan]
from the mountain of Esau by slaughter —By the great slaughter that will come upon them.

Verse 10

Because of the violence of your brother Jacob —Because of the violence you inflicted upon Jacob.

Verse 11

On the day you stood from afar —that you did not come to aid him.
you, too, are like one of them —I account it for you as though you were one of their attackers.

Verse 12

And you should not have looked on the day of your brother —You should not have looked and stood from afar.
on the day of his being delivered Heb. נָכְרוֹ. On the day of his being delivered into the hands of the heathens. And so does Scripture state concerning Saul: (I Sam. 23:7) "נְכַר אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים בְּיָדִי," "He has delivered him into my hand."

Verse 13

and you should not have stretched out upon their possessions —You should not have stretched out your hand upon their possessions. So did Jonathan render. And this is an ellipsis, to which we must add: "your hands."

Verse 14

And you should not have stood by the gap Heb. הַפֶּרֶץ. The place through which the escapees emerge to escape, and in French they call it "trou." And you should not have stood by me gap —From here [we learn] that one may not interrupt between one paragraph and another in reading the "Shma." [Haggadah of Rabbi Akiva]

Verse 15

Verse 16

For, as you drank on My Holy Mount —Just as you rejoiced concerning the destruction of My Holy Mount. [from Jonathan]
and be stunned Heb. וְיִשְׁתָּעֲמוּן. As the Targum renders: וְיִסְתַּזְעֲמוּן, an expression of confusion, amazement, and benumbing the mind; etourdissant in French - stunning.

Verse 17

those who inherited them —The possessions of the people who inherited them. [from Targum Jonathan]

Verse 18

for the Lord has spoken —Now where did He speak? (Num. 24:19) "Out of Jacob shall come a ruler, and he shall destroy him that remains in the city." [from Mechilta Bo 12:16, Pirké d'Rabbi Eliezer ch. 37]

Verse 19

And [the inhabitants of] the southland shall inherit —Israel, who were dwelling in the south of Eretz Israel, shall inherit the mountain of Esau, which is at the southern boundary; and the people of the plain shall inherit the land of the Philistines and Mt. Ephraim and Mt. Shomeron.
and Benjamin with [the inhabitants of] Gilead And the children of Manasseh, whose territory was the land of Gilead, shall spread beyond the borders of Eretz Israel on the east.

Verse 20

And this exiled host Heb. הַחֵל הַזֶּה. Jonathan renders: This people. הַחֵל הַזֶּה, An expression of a host. Cf. (Isa. 36:2) "And he came (sic) to Jerusalem with an army (חֵיל) of a great multitude," which deals with Rabshakeh, only that this one is missing a "yud." It is also possible to explain גָּלֶת הַחֵל הַזֶּה as "the exile of this valley."
who are [with] the Canaanites as far as Zarephath —The exile which is of the children of Israel who were exiled from the ten tribes to the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath
and the exile of Jerusalem which is in Sepharad —who are of the people of Judah who were exiled to Sepharad - they shall inherit the cities of the southland, which are in the southern part of Eretz Israel. The exegetes claim that Zarephath is the kingdom called France in French. Sepharad — Jonathan renders: Spain.

Verse 21

shall ascend —Princes of Israel as saviors on Mt. Zion.
to judge the mountain of Esau —to exact retribution from the mountain of Esau for what they did to Israel. to judge Heb. טפֵּשְׁ. joustiser in O.F.
the mountain of Esau — Jonathan renders: the great city of Esau.
and the Lord shall have the kingdom —This teaches you that His kingdom will not be complete until He exacts retribution from Amalek.